

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT

ASSOCIATED COMMITTEE:
COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH
AND FOOD SAFETY

HEARING OF JANUSZ WOJCIECHOWSKI

COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE

(Agriculture)

TUESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2019

BRUSSELS

1-002-0000

VORSITZ: NORBERT LINS*Vorsitzender des Ausschusses für Landwirtschaft und ländliche Entwicklung**(Die Anhörung wird um 14.30 Uhr eröffnet.)*

1-003-0000

Der Vorsitzende. – Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, sehr geehrter Herr designierter Kommissar, sehr geehrter Herr Wojciechowski! Meine sehr verehrten Damen und Herren!

Ich begrüße Sie, verehrter Herr Wojciechowski, im Namen aller Mitglieder des Ausschusses für Landwirtschaft und ländliche Entwicklung. Ihre Anwesenheit ist zweifellos ein Höhepunkt für unseren Ausschuss, und Sie befinden sich ja nicht auf unbekanntem Gebiet. Sie waren zwölf Jahre lang Mitglied dieses Ausschusses und hatten in der ganzen Zeit auch den Vize-Vorsitz dieses Ausschusses inne, bevor Sie dieses Parlament verließen, um für die letzten drei Jahre Mitglied des Europäischen Rechnungshofs zu werden. Bevor Sie sich auf EU-Angelegenheiten konzentrierten, hatten Sie wichtige juristische Funktionen in der Justiz Ihres Landes inne – vom Richter am Bezirksgericht bis zum Richter am Obersten Gerichtshof. Sie spielten auch eine bedeutende nationale politische Rolle als Mitglied und stellvertretender Sprecher des Parlaments der Republik Polen, als Staatssekretär unter anderem im Kabinett für legislative Angelegenheiten.

Ich muss diesen Ausschuss daran erinnern, dass das Parlament gemäß den in unserer Geschäftsordnung festgelegten Leitlinien für die Genehmigung der Kommission designierte Kommissionsmitglieder auf der Grundlage ihrer allgemeinen Kompetenz, ihres europäischen Engagements und ihrer persönlichen Unabhängigkeit bewertet wird. Die Mitglieder bewerten auch das Wissen über ihr potenzielles Portfolio und ihre Kommunikationsfähigkeiten.

Ich möchte Sie auch daran erinnern, dass der designierte Kommissar Wojciechowski vor dieser Anhörung einen vorbereiteten Fragebogen schriftlich beantwortet hat. Die schriftlichen Antworten wurden in allen Sprachen an die Mitglieder verteilt. Abschließend möchte ich daran erinnern, dass der Rechtsausschuss keine Einwände gegen die Abhaltung der Anhörung erhoben hat.

Bevor wir in die Debatte einsteigen, möchte ich Sie auf einige wesentliche Punkte in der Struktur der Debatte aufmerksam machen. Der designierte Kommissar wird gebeten, eine mündliche Eröffnungsrede von nicht mehr als fünfzehn Minuten abzugeben. Am Ende des Meetings erhält er fünf Minuten Zeit für eine Abschlusserklärung. Vielen Dank, lieber Herr Wojciechowski, dass Sie Ihre Redezeit entsprechend respektieren. Nach seiner Einführung wird es Zeit für fünfundzwanzig Fragen von Abgeordneten geben. Die Aussprache wird im Zeitrahmen von jeweils fünf Minuten abgehalten – eine Minute für die Frage und zwei Minuten für die Antwort von Herrn Wojciechowski. Bei Anschlussfragen sollte die Frage und die Antwort nicht länger als eine Minute plus eine Minute dauern.

Vielen Dank, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, dass Sie diesen Zeitplan einhalten werden. Die erste Runde, mit sieben Fragen, wird von den Koordinatoren der Fraktionen gestellt. Die zweite Runde, von achtzehn Fragen, basiert auf der Gesamtverteilung der Fragen zwischen den Fraktionen, einschließlich eines Vertreters der fraktionslosen Mitglieder.

Bitte beachten Sie, dass die Übersetzung in dreiundzwanzig Sprachen angeboten wird. Alle Sprecher können daher ihre eigene Sprache verwenden; Sie werden jedoch daran erinnert,

dass das was Sie sagen, verdolmetscht werden muss – deshalb sollten Sie nicht zu schnell sprechen.

Dann können wir jetzt in unsere Arbeiten einsteigen. Herr Wojciechowski, Sie haben jetzt die Möglichkeit für eine fünfzehnminütige Präsentation. Sie haben das Wort!

1-004-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – It is a great honour and also a great challenge for me to be here in front of you. As the Chair mentioned, I was a Member of the European Parliament for 12 years, a member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and Vice-Chair of this Committee. I was cooperating with many of you, and then I spent the last three years in the European Court of Auditors where the area of agriculture was also my responsibility.

Last year, I presented here the Court of Auditors' reports about the Young Farmers' Scheme and rural development programming. I also had contact with the ENVI Committee. I presented reports about food safety. The last time, because of my candidature for the Commission, my report about cross-border healthcare was presented by one of my colleagues from the Court of Auditors. My next report to be presented will be about anti-microbial resistance, linked also to agriculture.

During the presentation of my report about the Young Farmers' Scheme in this committee, I presented the shocking information – shocking at least for some audiences – that during one decade, from 2005 to 2015, we lost four million farms in the European Union. The number of farms was almost 15 million, and after a decade there were fewer than 11 million farms. If we lose four million per decade, it is 400 000 per year. More than 30 000 per month. More than 1 000 per day. Our debate is scheduled to last three hours, which means that during this debate more than 100 European farmers will probably lose their farm and their job. For many of them it will be a tragic, shocking situation because it not so easy to be a farmer today and then tomorrow to do something different – to be a taxi driver, for example. In many cases, this is a dramatic situation for European farmers.

We know that in France, for example, there is the problem of suicide among farmers. There is currently a movie being shown based on a true story entitled *Un homme de la terre*. This is the tragic story of a French family who lost their income. They lost their farm.

Maybe I'm being too pessimistic at the beginning of my speech, and I promise that further into my presentation I will be more optimistic. But there is a saying that is relevant here. 'What is the difference between a pessimist and an optimist? The pessimist is generally better informed.'

It is very important to have the real picture of the situation in European agriculture.

One of the reasons that I decided to be the candidate for the position of Commissioner for Agriculture, that I responded positively to the proposal, is that this is a chance to create a long-term vision for European agriculture, a long-term strategy. This is one of my tasks, which President von der Leyen sent to me in my mission letter. One of my tasks – if I am approved by Parliament, of course – is to create a long-term vision for European agriculture. We have a long-term vision for climate policy, a long-term vision for energy policy, but we don't have a long-term vision for the future of European agriculture. It is important to have such a vision because farmers are asking us 'What will be our future, what will be the future for our children?' It is important to give the positive answer that there is a future for European agriculture.

Leaders like President de Gaulle, Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and Prime Minister Fanfani, for example, who were European leaders when the common agricultural policy started – in 1962 – had such a vision. The common agricultural policy is a success story in the European Union. Thanks to the Common Agricultural Policy, we have agriculture, and, generally, we have food security which is ensured. Of course, there are a lot of weaknesses and a great need for reform of the common agricultural policy, but it is a success story. It was a long-term vision at the time, the vision of European politicians who decided to create the common agricultural policy. Now we need a long-term vision on how to reform this policy.

How to ensure a future, not only for European farmers but also for the common agricultural policy, is not a problem for farmers alone. It is a problem for all of society. For farmers: we have to protect them, to save European farms. But for all of society the problems are food security, food supply security and food safety. And agriculture is also very important for the planet. Agriculture is important for climate protection, for the environment, for the protection of biodiversity and in terms of animal welfare, which is an important issue for me because, in this Parliament, I was also Chair of the Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals.

To create a long-term vision for agriculture, it is important to have a true picture of the current situation. One of my first actions, if I am approved by Parliament, will be to prepare a special report about the current situation in European agriculture: a report presenting where we are and where we are going, how many farms we have now, how many farmers, and what the generational situation is.

We know from the report on the Young Farmers' Scheme, which I presented in this committee, that there is a big problem with generational renewal in European agriculture. We should compare the situation over, I propose, the last decade: between what we had 10 years ago and where we are now. It is very important to have a true picture about this current situation. It should provide a good base for programming the future development of European agriculture.

Another important thing is that we have the European Green Deal programme. I'm convinced that green agriculture – environment-friendly farming – is the best solution for the future of agriculture. This is our chance to propose support for the farmers who protect the environment better, who protect the climate better, and who improve animal welfare standards. In rural development programming, we should spend a minimum of 30% for the environment and climate.

This is a big chance, especially for small family farms in the European Union. I can promise that, if I become the Commissioner, I will strongly support all actions that will be helpful for small and medium-sized farming, especially for family farms.

My idea for the future is to be open to dialogue – with you, of course, as Members of the European Parliament, and dialogue with our farmers, farmers' organisations, and all of society, including NGOs which are interested in European agriculture. This is important because good policy should be created through dialogue with all our partners.

We have a big chance to create a long-term vision for European agriculture, to create a better future for our farmers, a better future for European agriculture, and a better future for our environment. If you approve me as a candidate, I will work together with you and with all the stakeholders to implement such a vision: to work for such a future for European agriculture.

1-005-0000

Der Vorsitzende. – Vielen Dank, Herr Wojciechowski, für diese Präsentation; auch Danke, dass Sie sich an die Redezeit gehalten haben.

Ich habe vorher etwas vergessen: Ich möchte Sie noch darüber informieren, dass diese Debatte hier live auf der Internetseite des Parlaments übertragen wird, und dass es auch möglich sein wird, eine Videoaufzeichnung der Anhörung auf derselben Seite abzurufen.

Ich steige jetzt sofort in die Diskussion für die Mitglieder des Ausschusses ein und gebe als Erstes dem Kollegen Dorfmann das Wort.

1-006-0000

Herbert Dorfmann (PPE). – Geschätzter Herr designierter Kommissar! Sie werden ja in den nächsten Monaten – Sie haben es gerade gesagt – auch die Reform der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik als Kommissar weiterführen müssen. Sie sind derzeit noch Mitglied des Rechnungshofes, und wenn ich mir anschau, was der Rechnungshof vor ungefähr einem Jahr über die Vorschläge zur Reform der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik gesagt hat und was Sie jetzt gerade hier gesagt haben – aber vor allem, was Sie uns schriftlich haben zukommen lassen –, dann entsteht der Eindruck, dass Sie entweder innerhalb eines Jahres vollkommen die Meinung geändert haben, oder dass Sie damals mit dem Bericht des Rechnungshofes nicht einverstanden waren. Der war ja extrem kritisch, was diese Vorschläge zur Reform angeht.

Ich gebe Ihnen vollkommen Recht, das haben Sie sowohl in den schriftlichen Antworten als auch hier gesagt, dass wir das Modell einer bäuerlichen Landwirtschaft verteidigen müssen. Wenn man sich anschaut, was sich in den letzten Jahren in Europa entwickelt hat – ich denke an Investitionen, nicht EU-Investoren –, da sind riesige Grundbesitze in Europa entstanden. Wie wollen Sie das angehen? Das hat mit bäuerlicher Landwirtschaft nichts zu tun.

Und eine zweite Frage: Es gibt immer noch Staaten, wo es das historische Modell in der ersten Säule gibt. Da hat man entweder das Glück Zahlungsansprüche zu haben oder eben nicht. Auch das hat mit bäuerlicher Landwirtschaft wenig zu tun. Wie wollen Sie diese zwei Themenpunkte als Kommissar angehen?

1-007-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – We have, on the table, the proposal of the reform prepared by the current Commission and by my colleague, Commissioner Hogan. This is the typical situation in the European common agricultural policy, that Mr Ciolos, as Commissioner, implemented the policy prepared by previous Commissioner Ms Fischer Boel. Mr Hogan implemented the policy prepared by Mr Ciolos. If I am Commissioner, I will implement the common agricultural policy based on the proposal by Mr Hogan.

But this is the chance to change this proposal: of course, I'm representative for European Commission now and I represent the Commission proposal, but I'm open for further discussion and to change and improve this initial proposal. The Commission proposal is only an initial proposal. Maybe it was not clear in my written answer, but I'd like to declare now, very clearly, that I am open for further discussion and for a discussion about the EU proposal, the EU amendment improving the Commission proposal. The proposal of the Commission is not the Bible; we can discuss how to improve it.

About the Court of Auditors opinion, I know: I participated. I was not the main rapporteur of this report, but I know the critical opinion of the Court of Auditors. The common agricultural policy should be greener, the Court of Auditors said, and I think it will be greener. This proposal is greener agriculture.

1-008-0000

Herbert Dorfmann (PPE). – Noch einmal ganz konkret zu den historischen Zahlungsansprüchen: Stimmen Sie mit mir überein, dass wir das Modell der historischen Zahlungsansprüche aufgeben und ein neues Modell der Verteilung in der ersten Säule finden sollten, und glauben Sie nicht auch, dass das besonders auch ein Problem in den benachteiligten Gebieten ist? Die benachteiligten Gebiete und Berggebiete sind ja auch bei der Verteilung des Geldes manchmal sehr benachteiligt und sind damit doppelt benachteiligt. Sie können schwieriger arbeiten und bekommen dazu auch noch weniger Geld.

1-009-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I agree with you, Mr Dorfmann, that this is a question which we should discuss and which we should improve if it will be possible. I agree that they are a problem for farmers in the less-favourable areas, like in mountainous areas, and we should see European agriculture everywhere: they are not the same conditions for all European farmers, and we should take this into consideration, of course.

1-010-0000

Paolo De Castro (S&D). – Grazie Presidente, Signor Commissario designato, ci troviamo di fronte a una vera emergenza globale, che si manifesta nelle sempre più frequenti catastrofi climatiche che affliggono le nostre aree rurali e tutti i nostri cittadini. Per affrontare efficacemente questa minaccia abbiamo bisogno di un approccio comune e fortemente coordinato.

Al contrario, la proposta legislativa per la riforma della politica agricola comune, attualmente in discussione, delega agli Stati membri tutte le responsabilità per la pianificazione di una strategia che contrasti questa sfida epocale. L'eventuale adozione di 27 piani strategici nazionali, non basati su un menù di misure definite a livello UE e che estromettono le regioni, svilirebbe la portata della più importante politica europea dedicata alla gestione dei suoli e alla tutela di un giusto equilibrio tra produzione, salute dei consumatori e ambiente.

Ritiene, Commissario designato, che questa rinazionalizzazione dell'intervento europeo per il settore agricolo e per le aree rurali possa essere all'altezza delle ambizioni europee per un'agricoltura più competitiva e più sostenibile, capace di essere protagonista della transizione ecologica e di dare un contributo significativo a quel *Green New Deal* cui Lei accennava?

1-011-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I hope so, yes. Of course there is discussion on to what extent decisions should be taken about agriculture on the European level, and on the national level. I remember a lot of discussion in this committee, that the common agricultural policy should be more flexible, because we felt we have different situations among the Member States. There are different types of farms, there are Member States in which farms are very big, there are Member States in which farms very small. And, for example, the generational situation is very different across the Member States. I think that this why flexibility is necessary. This is a renationalisation – maybe, I think not. We have common objectives, common interventions and common indicators.

To Mr de Castro and all Members of the European Parliament, I would say I'm open to discuss, maybe there are doubts about the control system, if it will be effective or not. It was the doubt of the Court of Auditors also that this performance approach maybe would be not enough for the control. I can promise one thing: the very important step is the approval of the national strategic plan. I will do everything possible to make the common agricultural policy more environmentally friendly, more friendly for the climate. But once again this is not the end of our work. I'm open for further discussion on improvement of the proposals.

1-012-0000

Paolo De Castro (S&D). – Commissario designato, noi non neghiamo la necessità di un'adeguata flessibilità dell'intervento pubblico per l'agricoltura, chiediamo però all'Europa di restare al timone della politica agricola, conducendola verso obiettivi più ambiziosi: il sistema di controllo dell'ammissibilità delle spese, basato sulle performance, che ci è stato presentato alla base del *New Delivery Model*.

Tuttavia numerosi membri di questa commissione e anche la stessa Corte dei conti europea, di cui Lei è membro, ritengono che un mantenimento dell'attuale sistema, basato sulla conformità a regole uguali per ogni agricoltore europeo, possa meglio salvaguardare quella dimensione comune della PAC, restituendo all'Europa il protagonismo che le compete nella lotta contro l'imminente sfida globale del cambiamento climatico.

Ora, al contrario di quanto da Lei affermato nelle Sue risposte scritte, è disponibile a mettere sul tavolo delle modifiche alle attuali proposte legislative, dopo aver individuato con i colegislatori il sistema migliore per scongiurare il rischio della rinazionalizzazione?

1-013-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I'm open for further discussion about this matter. During the legislative process – Mr De Castro, I will maybe read it to you later – this is my obligation sent by Ms von der Leyen: to be open to dialogue and to cooperate very closely with the European Parliament. I know your position and that of other Members of Parliament; they are questions which should be seriously considered in further procedures, including the question mentioned by you.

1-014-0000

Ulrike Müller (Renew). – Herr Wojciechowski! In ihren Vorschlägen zur Struktur der GD AGRI hat die Kommissionspräsidentin den wichtigen Bereich der staatlichen Beihilfen herausgelöst und an die GD Wettbewerb vergeben. Dadurch hat das Portfolio erheblich an Bedeutung verloren. Außerdem ist es wahrscheinlich, dass Sie als Kommissar den Vorschlag für die Übergangsbestimmungen übernehmen werden. Diese sind erforderlich, um die Lücke bis zum Inkrafttreten der neuen GAP zu schließen. Mir ist es sehr wichtig, dass diese Übergangsregeln genutzt werden, um die Verwaltungen der Mitgliedstaaten schrittweise auf das neue Delivery-Modell vorzubereiten.

Teilen Sie meine Ansicht und wenn ja, wie wollen Sie sicherstellen, dass die Übergangsregeln auf diese Weise konzipiert und für eine phasenweise Einführung des neuen Delivery-Modells genutzt werden können?

1-015-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – As to the question of state aid, of course this is not the decision of the President of the Commission, this state aid is mainly a question of competition, but I know that we have problems with state aid in the European Union. I know from the Court of Auditors' report that there is a lot of irregularities in this area. Some 20% of the state aid cases audited by the Court of Auditors were partially illegal or fully illegal.

I will have a lot of work to do about introducing reform in the common agricultural policy. It is not a big problem to cooperate with the Commissioner for Competition on the subject of state aid in agriculture. But of course the transition regulation is prepared, it will be adopted by the Commission. We will discuss this proposal in the European Parliament during further legislative procedures. It was necessary to prepare this proposal because it should be a continuation. The idea is to continue the current common agricultural policy with a new budget, and I think that we will be ready to start the new legislation, the new common agricultural policy from 1 January 2022.

1-016-0000

Ulrike Müller (Renew). – In den europäischen Verträgen steht geschrieben, dass die Landwirte die Nahrungsmittelproduktion in der EU sicherstellen müssen. Und wir haben den Artikel 42, der tatsächlich deswegen da ist, um eben die außerordentliche Stellung der Landwirte hervorzuheben. Deswegen sind ja die Sonderregelungen da. Wie wollen Sie die Ziele dann in einer ausgehöhlten Generaldirektion erreichen, wenn das jetzt zur GD Wettbewerb geht, und wie wollen Sie sicherstellen, dass auch die Bedeutung, die Interessen der jungen Landwirte auch künftig, und der europäischen Landwirtschaft als Ganzes in diesem neuen Rahmen nicht verwässert werden, und diese Übergangsbestimmungen, die *transitions rules*, sind tatsächlich notwendig, um die Verwaltungen mitzunehmen. Wir haben einen Systemwechsel, wir kommen von einem *Compliance Gain* zu *Performance*, und diese Übergangszeiten sollten wir nutzen, um die Verwaltungen mitzunehmen.

1-017-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Thank you very much. I do not have much to add to my previous answer. This transition regulation is necessary, because what else can we do? The common agricultural policy should not be interrupted. I fully agree with your opinion that the main obligation of farmers, according to the treaty, is to ensure food security for all European citizens.

Our obligation as European politicians is to support farmers to achieve this this objective. Generally, we have food security in the European Union, but it is not always very clear.

1-018-0000

Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE). – Herr designierter Kommissar! Sie haben ja Antworten gegeben, da habe ich erst gedacht, die hätte Ihnen der Herr Hogan aufgeschrieben, denn wenn man das liest, das ist alles *business as usual*. Sie finden die Vorschläge von Herrn Hogan auch ganz in Ordnung. Aber Sie lassen konkrete Antworten vermissen.

Was wollen Sie denn wirklich konkret tun, um den massiven Verlust an Biodiversität aufzuhalten? Landwirtschaft ist einer der Hauptverursacher. Sie geben überhaupt keine Antworten, wie sie vierzig Prozent der Klimagase in der Landwirtschaft verringern wollen. Sie sagen dann, die Landwirte werden schon wissen was zu tun ist, und die Mitgliedstaaten sollen entscheiden. Das kann keine Antwort von einem Kommissar sein, von dem ich eigentlich erwarte, dass er neue Vorschläge auf den Tisch legt.

Die konkrete Frage: Werden Sie das tun? Wie konkret werden sie bei dem Ziel? Benennen Sie doch mal konkret die Ziele Ihrer Vision von zukünftiger Landwirtschaft. Sie haben mit keinem Wort die biologische Landwirtschaft erwähnt. Wie sehen Sie die? Sie haben nicht erwähnt, dass es auch um Pestizidreduzierungen geht, was Ihnen Frau von der Leyen aufgeschrieben hat. Wie wollen Sie diese Ziele erreichen? Da sind sie völlig unkonkret. Werden Sie doch mal an bestimmten Punkten konkret, wie Sie das erreichen wollen.

1-019-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – It is very difficult to present everything in a two minute answer, but of course Mr Häusling I will present my approach, my proposals to support farming, which are environmentally-friendly and which protects biodiversity.

For example, to support small farmers – only an example – who use feed from their own farm and don't import soya beans from Brazil or Argentina, using in animal farming the feed which was produced in their own farm.

I will support animal welfare, I said before that that's very important for me. To improve animal welfare standards, a lower density of animals, to use natural methods like summer grazing or, in pig farming, to use straw for the pig, etc. I will propose such proposals which

are generally more environmentally-friendly. Environmentally-friendly farming, this is my idea.

1-020-0000

Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE). – Konkret war jetzt die Antwort nicht, aber wir hoffen dann auf Ihre Vorschläge.

Aber sagen Sie noch etwas hierzu: Sie haben auch von kleinen Bauern geredet. Wie wollen Sie diese ungleiche Verteilung von Geldern ändern, damit wir die Kleinbauern in der Europäischen Union mehr stützen und nicht die Großbetriebe am meisten von Flächenprämien profitieren? Wie sieht es aus mit der externen Konvergenz? Es gibt große Unterschiede in den Zahlungen zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten – gerade die baltischen Länder haben einen Bruchteil von dem, was andere Länder haben. Und drittens nochmal die Frage zu den Kürzungen in der zweiten Säule der ländlichen Entwicklung. Die sollen in der Finanzierung dreißig Prozent betragen. Wie können Sie denn das verantworten? Sie müssen doch darauf drängen, dass wir in die ländliche Entwicklung wirklich mehr investieren, als das, was in den Plänen vorgesehen ist.

1-021-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – As to whether support for small farmers is possible, for example, from the second pillar, I observe this problem that many funds from the second pillar are addressed for the small group of beneficiaries, for the big farms. This big part of the second pillar is addressed to the small number of big farms. It should be more democratic. More farmers should also be beneficiaries of the second pillar. Like I said before, environmentally friendly farming, ecological farming, organic farming, this is the direction. I will support this direction of the reform and the second pillar is a big chance for the small farmers too.

1-022-0000

Ivan David (ID). – Vážený pane doktore, budete v rámci reformy společné zemědělské politiky prosazovat, aby zemědělci ve všech členských státech dostávali srovnatelné dotace za podmínek také podle volby těchto států a při respektování rozdílů mezi nimi?

Další a poslední otázka: Budete podporovat uzavírání obchodních dohod, které umožní masivní dovoz potravin a zemědělských produktů do Evropské unie? Mám na mysli takové projekty, jako jsou smlouva s Mercosurem, dovoz z Vietnamu, Ukrajiny a tak dále.

1-023-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Regarding the problem of Mercosur and, generally, the trade agreement: yes, a lot of farmers are worried, are afraid, about the consequences of this trade agreement – they are sensitive sectors in agriculture. I can declare that I will monitor the situation. Next year, in 2020, the Commission will prepare an impact assessment, an evaluation of all the potential consequences for European farming of trade agreements like Mercosur or other agreements – Australia, New Zealand and others.

Of course farmers should be not victims of international trade agreements. If they are victims, our obligation is to help them, to support them and to use market instruments for intervention to help them. We have experience, for example, with the Russian ban. I can promise that, in each situation, I will be in favour of supporting farmers not to be the victims of trade agreements.

About the differences between Member States: of course, external convergence is a very sensitive political question. I think we are going the right way, in the right direction, but political decisions on how far will we go with external convergence is in the hands of Parliament and the Council.

1-024-0000

Ivan David (ID). – Chtěl bych se zeptat, jestli máte představu o jiných možných nástrojích, jak zabránit důsledkům těch obchodních dohod, o kterých jsme hovořili, než je podpora zemědělců poté, co dojde ke ztrátám v jejich hospodaření.

1-025-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – It should be a general principle in international trade that we should require the same standards from importers as from European producers. I'll give you an example. I was responsible for an audit on food safety and one of the findings in this report was that there were products imported from South America which were produced using pesticides which are forbidden on European Union territory. It should not have happened. The control system should be strengthened and generally we should use the principle that the same standards should be required of the importers as we require of our farmers, our producers.

1-026-0000

Zbigniew Kuźmiuk (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Na początku chciałbym bardzo serdecznie podziękować za Pana prezentację – pokazuje ona Pana zamierzenia na najbliższe pięć lat, ale także w dłuższym horyzoncie czasowym.

A teraz pytanie – Unia Europejska jest pierwszym na świecie eksporterem przetworzonej żywności. Ten eksport za 2017 r. wyniósł około 140 mld euro. Mamy w tym eksporcie nadwyżkę wynoszącą 20 mld euro. Zupełnie inaczej natomiast jest, jeżeli chodzi o eksport czy handel nieprzetworzonymi surowcami rolniczymi – tutaj eksport wynosi około 50 mld euro, a import aż 80 mld euro. Mamy więc tutaj deficyt wynoszący ponad 30 mld euro i ta tendencja się utrzymuje. Chciałbym zapytać, jak Pan patrzy na ten problem w świetle konieczności zapewnienia Europejczykom bezpieczeństwa żywnościowego.

1-027-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Thank you for your question. Your figures are true. It is a success story that the European Union is a net exporter of food products of course, but the success is based on imports. This is the success story of the food industry, but not fully the success story of European agriculture. My answer can be, this an argument, this situation on international trade, that European agriculture needs more support. It needs more support to ensure food security for the European citizens.

1-028-0000

Zbigniew Kuźmiuk (ECR). – Pan wspominał o swoim raporcie dla Europejskiego Trybunału Obrachunkowego dotyczącym wspierania młodych rolników ze środków drugiego filara. Ten raport nie wypadł zbyt korzystnie dla oceny wspólnej polityki rolnej. Wspominał Pan o tym na początku swojego wystąpienia, mówiąc o zniknięciu około 4 milionów gospodarstw w ciągu 10 lat. Chciałbym zapytać, czy środki w następnej perspektywie finansowej z tego drugiego filara może lepiej wykorzystać, aby zapobiec temu procesowi znikania gospodarstw w Unii Europejskiej?

1-029-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Thank you for asking about the Court of Auditors' report – a very, very important report. During two financial perspectives, we spent about EUR 10 billion in support for young farmers, and this time the number of young farmers was reduced from 3.3 million to 2.2 million of farmers under 40 years of age. The situation is very different among the Member States. There are Member States in which the majority of farmers are over 65 – like in Portugal, for example. There are Member States in which the situation is better: Germany, Austria, Poland, etc., which are relatively in a better situation. It shows that the policy for young farmers should be flexible. We should use the instrument appropriate to the situation in the Member States.

1-030-0000

Luke Ming Flanagan (GUE/NGL). – Many of the questions I was going to ask have been asked already, so I'll move on to the issue of importation of beef and trade deals and Mercosur, and also the situation whereby currently, from my information, we have about 300 000 tonnes of beef being brought into Europe every year. In the Mercosur deal, there is something called a 'safeguard mechanism', which allows both blocs to impose temporary measures to regulate imports if unexpected increases of certain products would harm certain sectors. Now, I would imagine if it's there for unexpected increases of certain products, it should also be there – or is it there – in a situation where we have potentially an expected crisis coming up at the end of this month, whereby European beef producers will lose – well, Ireland alone – access to a market of a quarter of a million tonnes. If we end up with a crash-out situation and a no deal Brexit, how will these safeguard mechanisms be implemented? Surely we should take care of our own market first, and look after others later? How will you do that?

1-031-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – My answer might not be precise enough, but I can declare in this situation, Mr Flanagan, that I heard about the problems of Irish farmers – not only Irish beef producers – in the European Union. After my appointment – if, of course, you approve me as a candidate – I will go to Ireland to see the situation and to ask Irish farmers what they need, what is necessary to help them. I declare this, and not only for the Irish. My way of work will be to talk with the farmers to try to find solutions together with them.

1-032-0000

Luke Ming Flanagan (GUE/NGL). – I hope you follow up on that and do that, because it's a very serious situation.

In relation to antimicrobial resistance (AMR): how are you planning to deal with the issue of AMR, and are you going to be proactive in proposing alternatives to intensive farming and thus dealing with one of the root causes of antimicrobial resistance? We are in a position to do something about this here, and if we don't, humanity will not thank us for it. Your children, your grandchildren certainly won't thank you for it, because if we don't do something about it, they don't have a future. What are your plans when it comes to AMR?

1-033-0000

Der Vorsitzende. – Vielen Dank, Herr Kollege Flanagan. Ich muss Sie nur darüber informieren, dass das kein *follow-up* war, sondern jetzt ein völlig anderes Thema. Das ist so eigentlich nicht vorgesehen.

Herr Wojciechowski, Sie dürfen aber selbstverständlich gerne antworten.

1-034-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I would like to answer this question because this is my last audit, which I also was responsible for. It was about the anti-microbial resistance problem in medicines and also in farming. I cannot talk about the findings of this audit because the official report will be presented next month by the Court of Auditors. All I can say is there is a problem, I know this problem, and we should act to reduce the use of antibiotics in farming, of course.

As for your question about intensive farming, I'm very much in favour of supporting non-intensive farming. Intensive farming is not a good solution for the environment, for climate change, etc. I will be a Commissioner supporting non-intensive farming.

1-035-0000

Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez (PPE). – En 2018, la Administración estadounidense impuso un arancel del 35 % a las aceitunas de mesa importadas de Europa. Estas son exportaciones, principalmente andaluzas y españolas, de empresas que están sufriendo pérdidas millonarias y

poniendo en riesgo miles de empleos. Ya entonces avisamos de que se trataba de un ataque que no iba dirigido solo contra España, sino contra el conjunto del sector agroalimentario de la Unión Europea, y que no sería el último. Ahora la Administración Trump pretende volver a la carga. Esta vez, decenas de productos alimentarios europeos están en su punto de mira: quesos, vino, aceite de oliva, fruta, carne, bebidas espirituosas, etc. De confirmarse un nuevo arancel, muchas empresas se verían obligadas a abandonar el mercado estadounidense y cientos de miles de puestos de trabajo europeos quedarían en peligro. La situación sería insostenible. Por eso, ¿qué medidas concretas tomaría usted como comisario para proteger el sector agroalimentario europeo de ataques proteccionistas como este?

1-036-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I have heard about these problems Spanish farmers are having. I can declare that I will act together with Commissioner Hogan, who will be responsible for trade, to recognise this question better and to try to find an instrument to help the Spanish farmers. I don't know exactly what the problem is. This is unfair trade maybe, but we will discuss what we should do with Commissioner Hogan. Thank you, Mr Zoido, for bringing it up.

1-037-0000

Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez (PPE). – Señor presidente, agradezco al candidato a comisario la respuesta que me da y, sobre todo, la iniciativa de haber hablado con el candidato Hogan, hasta ahora comisario de Agricultura, para adelantarse a los acontecimientos o estar preparado para cuando ocurran. Le reitero que, visto lo que ha sucedido en Andalucía y en España, es imprescindible que la Comisión Europea reaccione esta vez antes de que sea demasiado tarde.

1-038-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I would thank you once again, Mr Zoido, for pointing out that we have a very serious problem, and we should talk to find the solution for this. Thank you.

1-039-0000

Clara Aguilera (S&D). – Señor candidato, quisiera referirme a la nueva estrategia que pretende impulsar la presidenta de la Comisión, llamada «de la granja a la mesa». Tengo que decir que es uno de los pocos aspectos positivos que nos dejó la llamada crisis de las vacas locas y que esta nueva Comisión quiere impulsar de una manera renovada y más sostenible.

La primera pregunta que le quiero formular es, ¿significa esto que estamos ante los cimientos de una verdadera política alimentaria de la Unión Europea? ¿Una política en la que, dada la amplia experiencia de la Dirección General de Agricultura, con usted al frente, coordinaría el resto de direcciones generales implicadas, como Salud y Seguridad Alimentaria, Mercado Interior o Competencia? Esta sería una gran noticia, para mí y para esta comisión. Sin embargo, en la carta de la misión la presidenta solo pide a la Dirección General de Agricultura y a su cartera su contribución a la nueva estrategia «de la granja a la mesa». ¿Significa esto que no serán usted y la Dirección General de Agricultura quienes liderarán la nueva estrategia? ¿Cuál será el acuerdo?

1-040-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Thank you for this question. Of course, this is a very interesting, very important strategy. Agriculture is only part of the strategy and the Commissioner for Agriculture, DG AGRI, will participate in this strategy, but it is, as you mentioned, also a strategy for public health (DG SANTE), for competition and for the environment, etc.

The most important thing is what we eat, but also how we produce our food, in which way. My obligation as Commissioner of Agriculture – if you approve me, of course – is to promote and to support sustainable agriculture. Food production which is – I said again and again – environmental-friendly and protects the climate and animal welfare, etc. is one of the reasons

– long-term vision was one reason, and this, the sustainable production of food is the second reason – that I decided to participate in this mission.

1-041-0000

Clara Aguilera (S&D). – Sí, estamos de acuerdo. Pero yo lo que quiero transmitirle es que nosotros consideramos que en esa coordinación de esa nueva estrategia tienen experiencia suficiente la Dirección General de Agricultura y su propia cartera para que pueda dirigirla, no para que sea un convidado de piedra. La política agrícola fue la primera política y no queremos que la política alimentaria vaya perdiendo en favor de algo necesario. ¿Tiene usted la ambición?

Y, por último, el 10 de octubre se manifiesta el sector del aceite de oliva español. Está usted con él, apoyando sus iniciativas. El señor comisario Hogan no ha llegado a hacerlo. Espero que usted ofrezca apoyo al aceite de oliva español.

1-042-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – As I stated before, yes, I'm very interested in helping to solve this problem that the Spanish olive producers are having.

About the 'from farm to fork' strategy, maybe this is not especially new for agriculture. What is new is the common structure of this proposal, but for agriculture it means that we should do more for the environment and for the climate, for the protection of biodiversity. We did before, but now we do it more effectively.

1-043-0000

Dacian Cioloș (Renew). – Domnule comisar desemnat, adesea sunt întrebat ce proiect concret poate fi propus pentru ca Europa să recâştige încrederea cetăţenilor săi şi cred că politica agricolă comună poate să joace acest rol federator pentru că tot mai mulţi europeni înţeleg că alimentaţia de calitate, diversă, sigură din punct de vedere sanitar, biodiversitatea, convieţuirea cu natura vie pot să fie mai bine asigurate la nivel european – asta, sigur, dacă ne asigurăm că agricultorii pot trăi decent din munca lor.

Cu toate astea, există un sentiment de lasitudine inclusiv aici, la Bruxelles, chiar şi prin propunerea actuală de reformă a politicii agricole comune, care transferă doar responsabilităţi spre statele membre. Aş vrea, în primul rând, să mă asigur că sunteţi gata să discutăm despre soluţii pentru a evita o renaţionalizare a politicii agricole comune. Avem nevoie să dăm politicii agricole comune, alimentare şi de mediu un sens şi o viziune care să fie adaptate la realităţile de astăzi.

Aş vrea să vă întreb dacă, în cazul în care veţi avea această responsabilitate a politicii agricole comune, vă veţi angaja împreună cu noi, cu Parlamentul European, să dăm o viziune nouă acestei politici, punând alimentaţia, resursele naturale şi (*preşedintele a întrerupt vorbitorul*) ... veniturile decente pentru agricultori în centrul acestei politici?

1-044-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Of course I will cooperate very closely with the European Parliament to create the long-term vision for agriculture. The European Parliament will be my first partner for this debate.

It is very important to have support of the European citizens for the common agricultural policy. There is support. The majority of European citizens understand that we need to support our farmers, that the common agricultural policy is necessary, but the expectation of people is that agriculture policy should be more friendly for the environment, the climate, once again, for animal welfare, for biodiversity protection. With regard to intensive farming, people are worried that industrial farming is a threat to the environment and to the climate. We should send very clear signals to the public that the direction of the common agricultural

policy is environmentally friendly, and that there is support for environmentally friendly farming.

About renationalisation, as I pointed out in my answer to Mr De Castro's question, I'm open to further discussions. Maybe some solutions go too far in the direction of renationalisation. In my point of view, this is not renationalisation, but maybe we need more control at European level. I am open to discuss this with you and to improve this initial proposal.

1-045-0000

Dacian Cioloș (Renew). – Domnule comisar desemnat, o să auziți de multe ori, chiar în serviciile Comisiei, la multe idei și propuneri noi, răspunsul „nu se poate” sau „nu este posibil lucrul acesta”. Vreau să văd dacă din partea dumneavoastră există un angajament clar și ferm să dați o direcție politică nouă politicii agricole comune și să închidem cât mai repede discuțiile pe acest proiect de reformă pe care îl avem pe masă și să trecem apoi la o discuție de perspectivă, să dăm o perspectivă nouă agriculturii, politicii agricole comune, care să însemne mai mult decât o împărțire a banilor pentru fiecare stat membru, să vedem o viziune nouă despre ce înseamnă agricultura.

Aș vrea să știu dacă există un angajament din partea dumneavoastră că, dincolo de toate discuțiile acestea în care ne pierdem în detalii, există acest angajament și există viziunea aceasta a dumneavoastră despre ce ar trebui să însemne o politică care să vizeze alimentația, agricultura și resursele naturale.

1-046-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Of course I have this motivation to work together to create the vision. Our discussion about the future of agriculture has so far always focused this perspective of five years because we have a new Parliament, a new Commission, new Commissioners. When we discuss the new financial perspective, we look at seven years. Now we are in a special moment. A new Parliament, a new Commission, a new seven-year financial perspective and a new common agricultural policy. It is a good moment to start a debate about the long-term vision of agriculture, a long-term strategy. I invite all of you to cooperate closely to create such a vision. If I am approved as a Commissioner, at the end of my term such a vision will be our common success.

1-047-0000

Anne Sander (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le commissaire désigné. Volatilité des prix des matières premières, épisodes climatiques sévères, commerce international, autant d'événements qui influent sur le revenu des agriculteurs européens. C'est la conséquence du changement climatique et de l'alignement progressif des marchés européens sur les prix mondiaux. Ces changements ne sont pas sans coût; peu de secteurs agricoles sont exemptés de cette triste réalité quasi-quotidienne.

Des avancées essentielles sont présentes dans les rapports parlementaires de la précédente commission de l'agriculture: la sanctuarisation du paiement de base – part essentielle du revenu des agriculteurs –, la consolidation de l'omnibus, la création d'un mécanisme d'alerte précoce en cas de crise et le renforcement de la réserve de crise agricole.

Ces orientations vont dans la bonne direction. Or, dans les réponses que vous nous avez données, il n'y a pas un mot sur ces sujets-là. Alors, face à un Conseil divisé sur ces questions, allez-vous vous engager pour moderniser ces outils et faire face au choc de marché et protéger nos agriculteurs?

1-048-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Maybe my written answer was not precise enough, but I would state, Ms Sander, that we should do more to better protect the farmers on the market. There is a lot of problems on the common market. We have experience

in how to help farmers in this situation. I mentioned the Russian ban and the other crises before, but we should do more because this support is sometimes not enough. I know that this is one of the most important challenges for the Commission, and I can declare that it will be a very important part of my mission as a Commissioner to strengthen the system of market intervention.

1-049-0000

Anne Sander (PPE). – Je voudrais insister sur les outils de gestion des risques, essentiels pour pallier les chutes brutales des cours. Pourtant, la décision d’inclure ces outils dans les programmes de développement ruraux est laissée aux États membres, et peu ont fait le choix de les utiliser. De même, l’utilisation de ces outils par les agriculteurs est faible, car trop coûteuse.

J’entends bien, Monsieur le Commissaire désigné, ce que vous nous dites. Mais concrètement, comment allez-vous vous investir sur ce sujet pour permettre de développer ces outils?

1-050-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – The answer to this question, you understand, cannot be very precise as a Commission candidate, but I can declare that as a Commissioner I would cooperate with farmers and with the Members of Parliament to find a good solution to strengthen the system of protection of farmers. This is one thing which I can say now as a candidate to become Commissioner

1-051-0000

Carmen Avram (S&D). – Domnule Wojciechowski, la începutul acestei audieri ne spuneți despre milioanele de ferme care s-au închis, despre o zi în care se închid 4 000 de ferme și că în această zi, chiar în care are loc audierea, alți fermieri vor trece prin această tragedie. Motivele sunt multiple: de la problemele de climă, de la turbulențele de pe piață, lipsa de convergență externă care aduce discrepanțe semnificative între statele membre și, prin urmare, competiția este foarte, foarte dificilă.

Dar mai există și o altă problemă, relația pe care fermierul o are deseori cu marii retaileri, despre care dumneavoastră ați făcut referire în răspunsurile scrise – ați numit-o poziția slabă a fermierului în lanțul de aprovizionare – și v-ați asumat o echilibrare a relației de putere între fermieri și marii retaileri, întrucât, spuneți dumneavoastră, fermierii nu merită să sufere un tratament injust în relația cu partenerii comerciali. Vreau să vă întreb ce pași concreți veți face în această direcție și cum înțelegeți să reparați această slăbiciune a fermierului în lanțul de aprovizionare?

1-052-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Twelve years ago, in 2007, as a Member of Parliament, I was one of the authors of a written declaration adopted by the European Parliament calling on the Commission for action to better protect farmers in their relations with retailers. I remember that in this action to collect signatures for this written declaration, the European Parliament was supported by farmers’ organisations in many Member States in the European Union. After the successful action, I tried to thank them officially for their support. They said, ‘no, Mr Deputy, it would be better not to say that we supported this action’ because they were afraid about the negative consequences from the big supermarkets, etc. This is maybe a long-term consequence of this action – not only this, but many actions in this direction – that we have an unfair trade practices regulation. My obligation as a Commissioner will be to ensure implementation of this regulation. This is the way to provide better protection for our farmers in their relations with retailers.

1-053-0000

Carmen Avram (S&D). – Aș dori să profit de acest timp suplimentar pe care mi-l acordați ca să-i dau ocazia domnului comisar desemnat să spună, totuși, ceva concret despre ceea ce urmează să facă în această relație și despre acest plan de analiză în profunzime, despre care

spune că va avea loc pentru a rezolva, pentru a avea o imagine mai clară asupra relației fermierilor în acest lanț de aprovizionare.

1-054-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – As I said before, to ensure implementation of this new legislative instrument and also the next is to permanent monitoring of the situation and action in each case when European farmers are unfairly treated by the retailers and to use legal instruments to help them. They have a legal procedure which should be used in this situation. I will cooperate with the Commissioner responsible for competition and other Commissioners. This is what can I say about this now.

1-055-0000

Francisco Guerreiro (Verts/ALE). – Senhor Comissário indigitado, dadas as preocupações dos europeus relativamente ao bem-estar animal e a crescente ameaça da resistência antimicrobiana, é fundamental que, por parte da Comissão, haja claras mudanças políticas no modo como produzimos alimentos na Europa, nomeadamente reduzindo drasticamente a produção pecuária.

É urgente que se transite do atual modo de produção agropecuário, caracterizado pelo elevado consumo de matérias-primas, pela superprodução e intensividade, pelos graves níveis de poluição e pelos sistemas de criação meramente focados na quantidade, para um modo de produção que se foque na baixa utilização de matérias-primas, na contenção dos custos de produção e na internalização de todos os custos ambientais.

Assim, e relacionado com a política agrícola comum, pergunto-lhe se faz parte dos seus planos implementar uma nova estratégia para o bem-estar animal, visto que a última atualização é de 2015, e, por fim, pergunto-lhe como integrará as considerações de bem-estar animal na nova Política Agrícola Comum e o que fará para envolver a DG SANTE na avaliação dos planos estratégicos.

1-056-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – As improvement of the animal welfare standard will be one of the key issues in my functioning on this position, I'd like to say very important things.

This is my experience from the audit about animal welfare which I made as an auditor. I was responsible for the first audit on animal welfare issues in the history of the Court of Auditors, and the observation was that a system is more effective when we encourage farmers to improve standards. Not the repressive system, but to encourage for improvement of animal welfare standards.

In the current RDP, we have an instrument – animal welfare measure No 14 – and rural development programming, but it was used on a very small scale, it was EUR 1.5 billion during all the perspective, and we should spend more for this action and to encourage farmers to improve animal welfare standards. For example, less density in farming, less summer pasture, summer grazing and less density in pig farms, using straw for pigs, etc., etc. I will support this kind of farming and for me, I agree that it's better to have 1 000 farms with 100 pigs then one farm with 100 000 pigs. It's better for the environment and for many other things.

1-057-0000

Francisco Guerreiro (Verts/ALE). – Senhor Comissário indigitado, ainda focado em matéria de bem-estar animal, verificamos uma falha constante na implementação nos Estados-Membros do regulamento de transporte de animais vivos. Têm sido vários os relatos e eventos que demonstram que o acondicionamento, o abeberamento, a alimentação e os longos períodos de viagens desrespeitam claramente este regulamento.

Assim, pergunto-lhe muito diretamente: está disposto a restringir ou a terminar com o transporte de longa distância de animais vivos dentro e fora da Europa? Em que medida irá a Política Agrícola Comum financiar, ou não, este tipo de comércio?

1-058-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – This is a very important question. My idea is to create alternatives for this business, but it is not clear to me why it is economically possible that, for example, cattle from Ireland are transported to a seaport by truck, next across the sea to the Middle East, for example – a very, very long transport. Of course, this is export, but if we support the circular economy, support farmers who produce with the local meat industry, the animals are not transported over long distances. The production is for the local market. This should be an alternative which should be supported from European funds.

1-059-0000

Mara Bizzotto (ID). – Signor Commissario designato, sempre più spesso l'agricoltura europea viene usata come moneta di scambio negli accordi commerciali che l'Unione europea stringe con i paesi terzi.

L'insufficiente tutela di molte filiere chiave europee, come il riso, l'ortofrutta, lo zucchero, il latte o le carni, facilita la concorrenza sleale di alcuni paesi terzi che, con le loro produzioni di massa e di bassa qualità invadono il mercato interno spingendo al ribasso i prezzi.

Le chiedo quindi come intende tutelare nei prossimi cinque anni la competitività degli agricoltori europei, soprattutto dei piccoli agricoltori? Come intende proteggere, valorizzare e promuovere nei mercati internazionali e negli accordi commerciali con i paesi terzi le numerose indicazioni protette europee?

1-060-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – This is a very important issue. I remember, as a Member of Parliament, there was the same problem. There was an answer from one of the Commissioners, many years ago, to my question about why, in international trade relations, farmers were not protected, and it was 'because we have more interest in industry than in farming'. But farmers should not be victims of international trade. I can declare that I will closely cooperate with, first of all, the Commissioner for Trade, to protect farmers in trade relations, so that our farmers are not the victims of other types of business.

1-061-0000

Mara Bizzotto (ID). – Le guerre commerciali e diplomatiche vanno sempre a colpire i nostri agricoltori e il nostro agroalimentare, l'abbiamo visto con l'embargo russo e ora con i dazi statunitensi. Sempre la nostra agricoltura: si parla di un miliardo di dollari solo per l'agricoltura italiana, questo è il danno preventivato.

Le chiedo di aver coraggio a difendere l'agricoltura all'interno della Commissione. Mi chiedo e Le chiedo: avrà questo coraggio?

1-062-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – My answer is very short: yes, I will have such courage protect the farmers. I understand my function, my role as a Commissioner for agriculture, to be the advocate of the European farmers in situations where it is needed, of course.

1-063-0000

Mazaly Aguilar (ECR). – Señor comisario propuesto, tengo una pregunta para usted, lógicamente, pero también tres deseos y voy a empezar por ellos.

El primero, que tenga amplitud de miras ante las diferencias que existen en la agricultura europea y que recuerde que la agricultura mediterránea existe. Y también existe la ganadería intensiva.

El segundo —como ya han comentado aquí otros colegas—, que muestre firmeza para evitar que la Unión Europea sacrifique agricultura y ganadería en los acuerdos comerciales.

Y el tercero, que apueste por la defensa de la ciencia y el conocimiento frente al posturo ecologista.

Y mi pregunta. La pregunta está justificada por la situación actual de la agricultura. Si cada vez hay menos presupuesto, más obligaciones, más limitaciones a la hora de producir, ¿qué instrumentos o nuevos incentivos va a poner usted a disposición de los agricultores para poder competir en un mercado cada vez más global?

1-064-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I agree that we should see the problems of European agriculture, European farmers in the whole of Europe. Sometimes we create our opinions about the situation in the centre of Europe, but there are specific problems in the south of Europe or in the outermost regions. I remember during the sugar market reform, which was very important, my visit as a member of this Committee to Reunion Island, and to the Canary Islands – because they are banana producers. These are special sectors which we should also protect in the European Union.

As for ecology, I am in favour of animal welfare. This is one of my key ideas. Farmers should be encouraged to improve animal welfare, they should be supported. This is absolutely a key idea: support for farmers for voluntary improvement of animal welfare standards. I am not extremely ecologist, but farmers are naturally ecologists. I have heard the opinion that the farmer is the first ecologist. We should support farmers in this direction. We should help them, not fight against them.

1-065-0000

Mazaly Aguilar (ECR). – Señor comisario propuesto, como usted bien sabe, nuestros agricultores cada vez tienen menos productos fitosanitarios que puedan utilizar, la Unión Europea tiene bloqueadas las nuevas técnicas de mejora vegetal y parte de la investigación agrícola básica se marcha fuera de la Unión Europea. Por eso quería ir un poco más allá. ¿Qué cambios significativos plantea usted para revertir esta tendencia?

1-066-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I can say now that I'm open for discussion about this subject. I'm not ready to have a good answer to the full concept for this question. We should discuss about this and find a good solution. I am open for Ms Aguilar and other Members of Parliament to discuss about this question.

1-067-0000

Peter Jahr (PPE). – Herr designierter Kommissar! Ihren schriftlichen Antworten habe ich entnommen, dass Sie die Phil-Hogan-Reformen progressiv, innovativ fortsetzen und beenden wollen. Es soll ein gerechtes Viertelsystem etabliert werden, es sollen Direktzahlungen umverteilt werden zugunsten kleinerer Familienbetriebe. Genau das haben wir im Agrarausschuss diskutiert und beschlossen.

Meine Frage: Was halten Sie von dem im Agrarausschuss gefundenen Kompromiss hinsichtlich Kappung und zusätzlichen Zahlungen für die kleinen Betriebe – übrigens Degression wurde abgeschafft – und meinen Sie nicht auch, dass es an der Zeit ist, die Unterschiede zwischen den Direktzahlungen in den Mitgliedstaaten endlich zu beseitigen – dabei geht es um die Zahlungen an die Landwirte im gleichen Mitgliedstaat. Und zum Schluss

noch eine Bitte – vielleicht lag es auch an der Übersetzung: Sie haben intensive und industriemäßige Landwirtschaft in demselben Duktus benutzt. Für mich besteht ein Unterschied zwischen intensiv und industriemäßig.

1-068-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Yes, of course, there are differences, this is not the same – intensive and industrial. I see the problem with too much intensive and too much industrial farming. This is the problem. This is the kind of pathology in our agriculture.

About the differences between farmers and the question of internal convergence: yes, this is one of the questions mentioned in the Court of Auditors' opinion on the future of the CAP. There are differences, sometimes of a factor of 10 in the same Member State: one farmer receives EUR 100 per hectare and his neighbour EUR 1 000. It's not easy radically to change this situation. It's not easy because there is sometimes the question of different structures and sizes of farm, etcetera. In the long-term vision for agriculture, we should find a good solution for this.

I'm open to discussion. In the current proposal, Mr Hogan's proposal, there is a step in this direction but it is not enough. I agree with you. This is a question for further discussion, Mr Jahr.

1-069-0000

Peter Jahr (PPE). – Entschuldigung, vielleicht habe ich doch in meiner Anmoderation zu viele Fragen gestellt. Deshalb nochmal die Nachfrage zur Kappung und Degression, denn in unserem Ausschuss hat das eine große Rolle gespielt. Es gab lange Diskussionen und wir haben einen Kompromiss gefunden, der einerseits absichert, dass kleinere Betriebe eine zusätzliche Zahlung bekommen, aber andererseits auch die Mitgliedstaaten Flexibilität erhalten, weil die Bedingungen in den Mitgliedstaaten sehr unterschiedlich sind.

Wir müssen beides tun: gemeinsame Agrarpolitik, kleine Betriebe unterstützen, aber den Mitgliedstaaten auch genügend Flexibilität lassen, und vor allem auch ein System etablieren, das unbürokratisch ist und halbwegs fälschungssicher. Also noch meine Frage:

Freuen Sie sich über unseren im Ausschuss gefundenen Kompromiss hinsichtlich Kappung und Degression?

1-070-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I can answer that I am ready to discuss this compromise in the future. We have a Commission proposal on the table. This is a very interesting compromise. I am generally in favour of a flexible approach, for the possibility for Member States to decide, because we have different situations.

We have Member States like the Czech Republic where the size of one farm is more than 130 hectares. There are Member States like Poland, where 10 hectares is the medium size of a farm. There are Member States like Romania where farm size is less than ten hectares. Our approach should be flexible for this: the question of the small and big farms. We have 80 000 farms of over 250 hectares. Eighty thousand farms in the European Union receive 22% of direct payments.

1-071-0000

Elsi Katainen (Renew). – Arvoisa puheenjohtaja, arvoisa komissaariehdokas, meidän tiedämme kaikki, että vain kannattava maatalous voi ylläpitää elintarviketurvaa. Tiedämme siis sen, että vain kannattava maatalous voi ylläpitää elintarviketurvaa ja samalla tarjota myös ratkaisuja ympäristö- ja ilmastohaasteisiin. Miten te aiotte varmistaa yhteisen maatalouspolitiikan uudistuksessa, että maataloustuotanto säilyy kannattavana kaikkialla Euroopassa, myös epäsuotuisilla alueilla, ja millaisena näette nimenomaan maaseudun kehittämisrahastojen ja luonnonhaittakorvauksen roolin tässä yhteydessä?

Myös kestävän rahoituksen paketilla ja taksonomialla on suora yhteys maa- ja metsätalouteen ja erityisesti yhteisen maatalouspolitiikan toiseen pilariin. Kuinka aiotte pitää huolta siitä, että tässä finanssisektorin EU-lainsäädännössä ei pääse syntymään päällekkäisiä kestävyyskriteerejä jo olemassa olevien kestävyyskriteerien lisäksi?

1-072-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – In my opinion sustainable agriculture, the form of agriculture with a higher environmental standard, can be competitive if we will support these farms. The question is not that we should support intensive farming because it is economically more effective.

Maybe in the short term it is more effective, in the long term it is less effective, and this is the cost: to support farmers who protect our environment, who protect our biodiversity etc. But in my point of view, this is no choice. We have no alternative. We should support such farming. This is absolutely necessary, and together with farmers, supporting farmers, not against the farmers, not to force them but to support them. This is the sense of the common agriculture policy, I think. First pillar, second pillar, all common agricultural policy. This is my answer.

1-073-0000

Elsi Katainen (Renew). – Toivottavasti jatkossa voimme keskustella taksonomiasta ja kestävyyskriteereistä, mutta jatkokysymyksenä edelleen toiseen pilariin viitaten, kirjallisessa vastauksessanne sanoitte, että Euroopan maaseutualueiden on säilyttävä hyvin elinvoimaisina ja dynaamisina. Hienoa, että ajattelette näin. Tämän valossa toisen pilarin rahoituksen leikkaukset ovat erittäin valitettavia. Taloustilanne Euroopassa kiristyy eikä kaikilla jäsenvaltioilla ole varaa korvata noita menetyksiä kansallisesti. Tarvitsemme siis lisää joustoa pilareiden välille. Olisitteko Te valmis antamaan lisäjoustoa sellaisille jäsenvaltioille, jotka aikovat toteuttaa ympäristötoimenpiteitä toisen pilarin kautta?

1-074-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Of course I will support the decision of the Member States about the transfers between pillars, from both sides – from the second to the first pillar, and from the first pillar to the second pillar – because it is necessary. We have different situations in the Member States, but in each case it should be to the benefit of the environment and climate change. It is very, very important to ensure the consequence of the transfer between pillars. The decision on how much will be spent for the second pillar – well for both pillars, but especially for the second pillar, you're right that in the Commission proposal we had about EUR 100 billion, now we have less than this, EUR 80 billion – this is a political decision for the Parliament, the Council and the Member States. It is for them to decide how big the budget for the second pillar will finally be. Having more money we can do more of this, of course.

1-075-0000

Daniela Rondinelli (NI). – Signor Commissario designato, negli ultimi cinque anni abbiamo assistito a un Commissario all'agricoltura che si è distinto per la sua scelta politica di non voler tutelare gli aspetti chiave del suo portafoglio. Questo ha originato critiche trasversali, legittimando coloro che vedevano nel suo lassismo un mezzo per arrivare alla nomina a Commissario al commercio.

Gli accordi commerciali firmati negli ultimi cinque anni hanno penalizzato enormemente il settore agricolo europeo e soprattutto gli agricoltori che fanno della qualità il fulcro della loro produzione. Nell'ambito degli accordi commerciali l'agricoltura è stata la moneta di scambio per ottenere vantaggi in altri settori, senza alcuna reale forma di tutela e compensazione, generando crisi e perdite di posti di lavoro.

Pur di difendere gli interessi di grandi lobby internazionali e agevolare la firma degli accordi, ricordo che la scorsa Commissione ha persino permesso l'importazione nell'Unione di grano al glifosato, nonostante le proteste di cittadini, agricoltori e consumatori.

È un dato di fatto che la contraffazione del settore agroalimentare su scala globale è cresciuta a dismisura in questi ultimi anni...

(Il Presidente ritira la parola all'oratrice)

1-076-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Yes, of course, but it is not my role to comment on the activity of the previous Commissioner in international, European trade defence policy. Defending the interests of our farmers in trade policy will be the subject of a new audit by the European Court of Auditors and this will be the occasion to evaluate the situation.

But I can declare that I will be an active Commissioner for this, to protect farmers in a situation where there is the risk that they will be victims of international agreements, trade agreements, etc. I can declare that I will be active but, well... I can say this.

1-077-0000

Daniela Rondinelli (NI). – Le vorrei chiedere allora come intende promuovere una discontinuità. Vuole diventare allora un vero protagonista dei prossimi negoziati commerciali, al fine di tutelare gli interessi agricoli?

1-078-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Of course, as I said before, the very important document will be this impact assessment. Firstly we should know and have knowledge about all potential consequences. A trade agreement for agriculture – we should know everything about this. After that it is necessary to find a solution, an instrument for protecting the farmers, because of course there are reasons there are trade agreements – this is Mercosur, it is not some crazy idea, but the problem is how to protect the farmers in this agreement. We have a chance to protect farmers but firstly we should know all the potential consequences. The impact assessment is a very important document and it will be ready next year.

1-079-0000

Maria Noichl (S&D). – Ich habe eine Frage mitgebracht: Die EU hat sich ja der Erreichung der Ziele für nachhaltige Entwicklung der Vereinten Nationen verschrieben, der sogenannten SDG. SDG5 und SDG15 liegen mir ganz besonders am Herzen.

Ich möchte mit SDG-15 beginnen. Land- Ökosysteme schützen, wiederherstellen und ihre nachhaltige Nutzung fördern, Wälder nachhaltig bewirtschaften, Wüstenbildung bekämpfen, Boden-Degradierung beenden und umkehren und den Verlust der Biodiversität stoppen. Das ist weltweit unsere Aufgabe. Welchen Anteil haben wir daran, wir mit unserer Agrarpolitik?

Ich frage Sie ganz konkret, wie Sie zu den Nachhaltigkeitskriterien für Importfutter stehen, zum Beispiel für Soja? Nachhaltigkeitskriterien für Soja, die zu uns nach Europa kommt. Soziale, ökologische natürlich, und ökonomische. Wie stehen Sie aber auch zu dem Thema Entwaldung? Entwaldung die passiert, weil zum Beispiel auf dem Boden Soja angebaut wird oder andere Produkte.

Deswegen meine zwei Fragen: Wie wollen Sie sicherstellen, dass die EU-Importe von Agrarrohstoffen unter Wahrung der SDG15 produziert werden und nicht zu negativen ökologischen und sozialen Auswirkungen führen, und würden Sie die Forderung des Parlaments nach Nachhaltigkeitskriterien für Importfutter unterstützen?

1-080-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – A lot of questions there. On the import of soya, there is a need for this because our animal farming needs it for feed. But we import 40 billion soya per year. It is a very big import. As I said before, we can support farmers, and from the second pillar, who don't use imported food, for example. This is one possible action. It will be my one of my proposals for this. Sustainability is a very important task for agriculture, and we should do it.

Sorry, I forgot your other question.

1-081-0000

Maria Noichl (S&D). – Wenn es um die Waldbewirtschaftung geht. *The forest.*

1-082-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Yes, of course, the forests. Certification was a similar question. We have the new audit report from the Court of Auditors. There is a problem for example with soil protection. We don't have a regulation about soil protection. This is one of the reasons for the certification. There is also climate change. Farmers are victims of climate change in this situation because certification is a very serious problem in the European Union. There are recommendations from the court. I will co-operate with the Commissioner for the environment to solve this problem in the future.

On deforestation, fortunately in the European Union we don't have the problem of deforestation. Forest areas over the last 20 years have increased by 11 million hectares. But deforestation is taking place in other continents. Of course we should address this problem with international cooperation.

1-083-0000

Maria Noichl (S&D). – Sie haben die europäische Landwirtschaft jetzt teilweise als Opfer dargestellt. Ich habe in meiner Frage aber eigentlich andersherum argumentiert. Wo ist die europäische Landwirtschaft auch Täter? Wo ist die Art und Weise der europäischen Landwirtschaft mit schuld, dass Entwaldung passiert auf der anderen Seite der Welt und wo sind wir mit schuld, dass Flächen für – zum Beispiel – Soja benutzt werden? Mich würde interessieren, wie Sie zu der Verantwortung stehen, die wir auch als europäischer Agrarausschuss haben, um die Situation weltweit zu betrachten.

1-084-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – It is maybe a controversial opinion that agriculture is responsible, because farmers are forced now to use this imported feed. This is necessary, but once again I answer that we should support circular farming, local farming with local industry. It will be one of the methods to reduce imports from other continents.

1-085-0000

Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE). – Pytania o wyrównanie płatności już były, wobec tego przejdę do projektu budżetu na kolejną perspektywę, do którego dołączona jest klauzula warunkowości dostępu do tych środków. A te warunki to przestrzeganie zasad państwa prawa i dyscypliny finansowej. Gdyby tą klauzulą zostało objęte jakieś państwo członkowskie, to w pierwszej kolejności olbrzymią cenę zapłaciliby rolnicy blokadą dopłat, a dopłaty to przecież 50% dochodu, jaki zostaje rolnikom po odliczeniu kosztów. Jakie jest Pana zdanie na temat tego instrumentu?

Drugie pytanie dotyczy planów strategicznych i obowiązku zawarcia w nich przez państwa członkowskie definicji aktywnego rolnika. To niezwykle ważne dla kraju takiego jak mój, gdzie już ponad 50% beneficjentów dopłat to nie są rolnicy, to są tylko właściciele ziemi. Coś z tym trzeba naprawdę wreszcie zrobić. Mam nadzieję, że Pan będzie popierał to rozwiązanie.

1-086-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – About the ‘active farmer’ definition, I agree. Yes, we need such a definition. I can declare cooperation during further legislative procedure to discuss this.

About the first question, on conditionality, the rule of law and the consequences for the budget, I can answer that we have the opinion of the Court of Auditors about the proposal for the regulation. I was not the author, it was one of my colleagues from the Court of Auditors. The whole Court is responsible for the opinion but it was prepared by one of my colleagues. I will read only the titles of the chapters of this opinion:

New mechanism with much discretionary power for the Commission; no specific stakeholder consultation done; no impact assessment done; self-guidance and criteria not clearly specified; no clear obligation for the Commission to assess the possibility of leaving measures at its own initiative; no requirement for the Commission to assess the potential impact on financial beneficiaries and the national budget.

Is not my role to evaluate the Commission proposal, but according to the Court of Auditors opinion, this proposal is not well prepared. I can say only this.

1-087-0000

Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE). – Dziękuję za stanowisko w sprawie aktywnego rolnika, tym bardziej że rząd, który Pana desygnował, na etapie prac nad tymi rozwiązaniami był przeciwny temu rozwiązaniu.

Natomiast co do klauzuli warunkowości, ja mam do Pana prośbę jako do przyszłego komisarza i jako rolnik wielkie oczekiwanie, żeby przekonał Pan kolegium komisarzy, ale może też i Radę, żeby z tej klauzuli wyłączyć rolników. Bo nie może być tak, że za błędy rządzących albo działanie z premedytacją, świadome, tak naprawdę największą cenę płacili rolnicy. To jest 50% dochodu, jaki by im zabrano. Ja sobie nie wyobrażam, żeby zastosować coś takiego w stosunku do jednej grupy zawodowej. Wielkie wyzwanie przed Panem.

1-088-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I think there will be a discussion in the new Commission about this proposal. The opinion of the Court of Auditors, which is critical, should be taken very seriously. It will be my proposal to very seriously consider the objections of the Court of Auditors for this proposal of conditionality.

1-089-0000

Matt Carthy (GUE/NGL). – I want to refer back to your opening statement where you reference the fact that the EU is losing farms at a rate of about four million per decade. I want to save you the expense of having to carry out an assessment or a study to find out why that is the case, and explain to you that it’s because farms aren’t viable. Farmers aren’t making a profit and, therefore, they’re being forced off their farms. I want to mention two areas that need to be addressed if we are to tackle that.

First is reform in farm payments. Currently, about 125 000 of the wealthiest farm enterprises receive about EUR 13 billion in CAP payments. That’s about 10% of the overall EU budget – not the CAP budget, the overall EU budget – going to that small number of farm enterprises, while most farmers receive a pittance in comparison.

Secondly, within the agriculture model, we have seen ongoing and strengthening consolidation within corporate processors and retailers, and the Commission has sat by and allowed that to happen. That has, in turn, depressed the prices that farmers are receiving. It has led to unprecedented protests in countries like Ireland.

My question to you is: what are your plans to ensure the redistribution of farm payments and to tackle the dominance of a small number of corporate interests in the agricultural sector?

1-090-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Of course, the European Union cannot decide about prices in the market. This market is free. But, in each case, I will be ready as a Commissioner to hear the farmers, to recognise their problems and to try to find solutions. I will be the Commissioner open for dialogue with farmers. I can promise you that.

You are right that the differences between small and big farming are a big problem. We know that 20% of the biggest farmers received 80% of the CAP budget and the remaining 80% receive 20% of the budget. But how do we change that?

This is one of the questions we should resolve during the debate about the long-term vision for agriculture. There is no solution in the current perspective, but maybe capping is one solution. Maybe the ‘active farmer’ definition can be one of the solutions to change this situation. But, generally, it is a good thing to discuss as part of the long-term vision of agriculture –how farms should be supported, where is the place for the small farms, and for the big farms? These are questions to which we should find a common answer.

1-091-0000

Matt Carthy (GUE/NGL). – I don’t know what that was, Commissioner-designate, but it wasn’t an answer to my question. I have a feeling that you’re going to be back with us again before this is finally over.

For now, can I just give two specifics – and ask you for your opinion on them – that I believe would help resolve the problems I outlined? One is for us to have, across Europe, a hard, mandatory upper limit on high payments, so that the balance can be redistributed to ordinary farmers. Do you support that?

Secondly, I believe firmly that, in order to tackle the dominance of a small number of processors and retailers, we need to introduce a ban on below-cost selling of agriculture products by retailers. Would you support that measure also?

1-092-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Of course, dumping should be forbidden in the European Union and everywhere. I remember, as a former Member of the European Parliament, that there was successful action against dumping prices for strawberries imported from China many years ago.

The capping question is one of the most important questions, but it is necessary to find a political solution. The position of the Commission now is voluntary capping: Member States should decide. Argument number one for voluntary, not mandatory, capping is that we have different situations in the Member States. There are big differences between the size of farms. As I said before: 130 hectares is the medium farm size in the Czech Republic, 10 hectares in Poland. It’s very difficult to find the same solution for all Member States. That is the reason why this proposal is voluntary.

Sorry, the Commission proposal is mandatory, but there is argument about it and I understand the position that it can be voluntary.

1-093-0000

Isabel Carvalhais (S&D). – O Senhor Wojciechowski reconheceu aqui que há zonas rurais que merecem uma atenção mais especial e, certamente, sabe que, entre essas regiões, estão precisamente as regiões ultraperiféricas, porque também se acrescentam à sua situação constrangimentos que são estruturais.

Só que a sua visão de longo prazo, de que aqui nos fala, parece querer conciliar muitas ambições, muitos objetivos. E eu preciso de perceber exatamente, nessas ambições, o que é que pretende fazer em concreto para reabilitar zonas rurais que já estão neste momento afetadas pelo despovoamento, pela desertificação e que assentam num perfil sociodemográfico complexo, envelhecido, com pouca literacia. Só que toda a gente é pessoa. E então, em concreto, que medidas é que gostaria de apresentar para esses pequenos agricultores que, bem ou mal, são o esqueleto destas zonas rurais?

1-094-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – As I said before I fully understand the specific problems of the farmers in regions the Azores. I have visited that region. There are specific problems, as there are in Madeira, in other outermost regions in Europe, Spanish and French regions, Réunion and Guadeloupe. But we have the POSEI funds, the proposal of the Commission is to continue this system of support, maybe this is not enough. I'm open for further discussion. I will remember all the farmers in Europe, also the farmers in the outermost regions. I have experience because I know these regions – maybe not all of them, but the majority of them, and I understand the specific situation of these farmers.

1-095-0000

Isabel Carvalhais (S&D). – Pode aqui então garantir, de alguma forma, que reassumirá o compromisso do Comissário Hogan de proteger o Regime POSEI e de defender qualquer reversão dos cortes no seu orçamento? Posso eu, no fundo, levar aos meus concidadãos esta certeza de que teremos esse seu compromisso também?

1-096-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – The POSEI funds are reduced like all the common agricultural policy, but I'm open for further political discussions and political debate about the budget of the CAP, including the budget of POSEI. If there is political support for the idea of keeping POSEI funding at its current level, I have nothing against this.

1-097-0000

Molly Scott Cato (Verts/ALE). – Mr Wojciechowski, the UN has made clear that we need to use our land as a carbon sink in order to stay within the 1.5° warming limit and there's a big opportunity here for farming to be part of the solution to climate change and biodiversity collapse.

So I'm just going to explore a little bit more what you meant when you said you support green farming. We need an organic system of farming that will build carbon-rich soils without the use of toxic chemicals, and we need to restore wetlands, peatland and forests. We need to eliminate food waste and stop the imports of soya that drive deforestation to feed too many farm animals.

Public money should support farming practices that work with nature and use natural processes, especially mainstreaming crop rotations including legumes. We need to make farming resilient using agro-forestry and living soils to prevent flooding. That's our view of green agriculture.

Are you ready to play a leadership role in overseeing this transformation of our agricultural system? Will you lead the European Green Deal for agriculture?

1-098-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – My answer is yes. I am fully ready, because one of the reasons that I accepted the unexpected proposal to be a candidate to the Commission was the opportunity to change European agriculture in the direction of more green agriculture, which is very important, but with the farmers instead of against the farmers. It is very important. I sometimes hear opinions that I am in favour of forcing farmers towards

green agriculture. No, I want to encourage them, to support them, to help them and, in the end, to help all society.

1-099-0000

Molly Scott Cato (Verts/ALE). – Well, I think you know that we're going to be holding you to that. I'm wearing my green jacket here today, and my colleagues will make sure that this does happen. Business as usual is not an option for farming and for our land use. I would also say that we're not against the farmers either, but what we are against is the agri-businesses that actually make farmers dependent on them and encourage them to use chemicals and machinery that they can't afford to pay for. That is not the green way. Will you therefore challenge the domination of agri-businesses in our farming sector so that we can have a truly green future for farmers?

1-100-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – My answer will be shorter than one minute!

Yes, I agree with you.

1-101-0000

Asger Christensen (Renew). – Vil du give mulighed for, at vi mere åbent kan definere, hvad der er landbrugsarealer, så den enkelte landmand får mere fleksibilitet til at dyrke sin jord? Det er helt afgørende, at vi får skabt incitament for mere biodiversitet, uden at landmanden risikerer at miste sin grundbetaling. Det er sund fornuft, som vil have stor effekt på vores landbrug og biodiversiteten. Hvordan vil du sikre, at de europæiske landmænd kan levere på det stigende behov, der er for bæredygtig fødevarerproduktion, og samtidig give landmændene mulighed for at levere på klima- og miljøområdet? Landbruget er jo en del af løsningen.

1-102-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – That is a difficult question, but I can say what our approach to agriculture should be and what my approach to agriculture is. We should see the three important questions. One is farmers: we should protect farmers, we should support them to have incomes, to have the possibility to live in rural areas, to be farmers. The next is one for all of society, and that is food security and food safety, we should be sure to have food security. This is very important. Also, as I said before, biodiversity, environment, climate change, everything. We should support agriculture, should be able to guarantee all of these values, to protect the farmers, to protect the environment, etc. But can I guarantee? I will do everything possible for this direction, but the guarantee can be done by the farmers, by the European farmers, supported by the whole of society.

1-103-0000

Asger Christensen (Renew). – Vil du som kommissær lade landmændene få mere selvbestemmelse over deres egen landbrugsproduktion og sørge for, at vi stiller færre, men mere fornuftige krav til landmændene? Ursula von der Leyen says "one rule in, one rule out". I say "one rule in, two rules out". Will you vote for that? Hvorfor vil du favorisere små klimabelastende landbrug på bekostning af moderne og højteknologiske landbrug? I'm a dairy farmer, and I am green!

1-104-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – I agree that there should be no more bureaucratic rules, not one bureaucratic rule more. We should not create new bureaucracy, especially for farmers and ...

Sorry, I've lost the first part of your question.

1-105-0000

Asger Christensen (Renew). – Hvorfor vil du favorisere de små klimabelastende landbrug på bekostning af moderne højteknologiske landbrug?

1-106-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – No, maybe this is not a clear position. I never said that I support only small farms, but small and medium-sized and environment-friendly. Environment-friendly farming is not only about small farms. Small farms, in a natural way, are better prepared for this function, but this is not a problem of scale. The problem is about the kind of farming.

1-107-0000

Christophe Hansen (PPE). – Together we will have to decide, with due diligence, about the future CAP and more than one-third of the EU budget. Your integrity was questioned in 2016 during your nomination process to the Court of Auditors, and more than 400 MEPs of this Parliament didn't give you their confidence at the time. In recent times we read in *Politico* and *Der Spiegel* that you had some trouble with your travel allowances and that you paid back, on your own initiative, you said, some EUR 11 000. So my question to you is two-fold: do you confirm that you paid back the unduly received travel allowances on your own initiative? And secondly, how will you manage more than one-third of the EU budget if you get confused with your own travel expenses declaration?

1-108-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Thank you for this question. OLAF concluded the investigation, which was started in July 2016, and all my travel expenses were checked – I think, more than a thousand documents. But I repaid the travel expenses five months before the investigation, and I think that this payment, on my own initiative without any request from the Parliament financial service, may have been the reason for the investigation. It was not a result of the investigation.

I paid this amount on my own initiative because there was a risk – only a risk – of incorrect payment. Not one euro was misused on my side. I have a description here, in the OLAF documents, about this case: only 'non-intentional mistakes which had no influence for the budget'. Not one euro was misused by me. The OLAF conclusion confirmed my public statement on this case.

1-109-0000

Christophe Hansen (PPE). – You repeated three times that it was on your own initiative. So you openly deny that the Secretary-General of this House confirmed a recovery of unduly perceived allowances on 8 July 2014, and you deny that you appealed that decision with your letter to the Quaestors dated 14 July 2014, and that the Quaestors confirmed the Secretary-General's decision on 16 December 2014? All this was before. You say your own initiative, but to me it sounds a little bit different.

1-110-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – You are talking about another question, it was the question of the margin. I was a victim of the situation not the perpetrator. Yes, it was the payment for the travel agency. The financial service, in its opinion, paid too much for the travel agency.

Sorry, this is not a case in which there was something wrongful on my side. There was nothing wrong.

1-111-0000

Der Vorsitzende. – Vielen Dank, Herr Wojciechowski, und vielen Dank an die Kolleginnen und Kollegen, an alle Teilnehmer der Anhörung am heutigen Nachmittag.

Ich glaube, Ihre Antworten waren für uns sehr hilfreich und Erkenntnis gewinnend. Herr Wojciechowski, ich möchte Sie nun bitten, zu ihrer fünfminütigen Abschlusserklärung zu kommen. Aber zuvor möchte ich ankündigen, dass gleich im Anschluss von 17.45 bis 18.45 Uhr unter Ausschluss der Öffentlichkeit eine Sitzung der Koordinatoren stattfinden wird, um diese Anhörung zu bewerten. Die Koordinatoren werden aufgefordert, dann ihre Meinung dazu zu äußern, ob das designierte Kommissionsmitglied Wojciechowski sowohl als Mitglied des Kollegiums, als auch zur Wahrnehmung der ihm übertragenen Aufgaben befugt ist. Also nun zur fünfminütigen Schlusserklärung. Herr Wojciechowski, Sie haben das Wort.

1-112-0000

Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner-designate. – Honourable Members of the European Parliament, thank you for the many pertinent questions you have raised over the last couple of hours.

To finish, please allow me to stress what is important to me. I would like to remember one particular word from this afternoon. That word is ‘dialogue’. I have always been open for dialogue and I will continue to be open. I will engage in dialogue with you, honourable Members, as individuals and in this committee, and I will extend that dialogue to all our stakeholders: to farmers, farmers’ organisations and other NGOs with an interest in the agricultural sector. We should work together for the benefit of our agriculture and our countryside.

I commit myself to join you in debates when you consider it useful, keeping open communication channels and always listening to you. As part of the dialogue, I’m keen for us to cooperate on the development of a long-term vision for agriculture. We need an informed debate on what we want for our farms and our farmers in the decade to come. Such a debate can only be held on the basis of robust analyses of trends and drivers. Let us create and share together a vision for our rural areas and our agriculture.

1-113-0000

Der Vorsitzende. – Vielen Dank, das war sehr kurz. Die Zeiten wurden mehr als eingehalten. Sie dürfen gerne klatschen.

Wir sind nun am Ende des öffentlichen Teils der Anhörung angekommen. Ich kann, wenn die politischen Gruppen es wünschen, noch sagen, dass sie im Raum verbleiben können und sich zum Beispiel auch in irgendeiner Ecke dieses Raums zur Beratung treffen können, wenn sie das wollen. Aber die Sitzung der Koordinatoren beginnt dann um 17.45 Uhr. Nochmals herzlichen Dank an alle Teilnehmer, an die Fragenden, an Herrn Wojciechowski, und einen schönen Abend.

1-114-0000

(Die Anhörung wird um 16.54 Uhr geschlossen.)